



DRY TORTUGAS

NATIONAL PARK

RECREATION
VISITORS (2017)

54,281

State: **Florida**

Year Established: **1992**

Land Area: **64,701 acres**

Highest Elevation: **Loggerhead Key -
10 feet (3.0 m)**

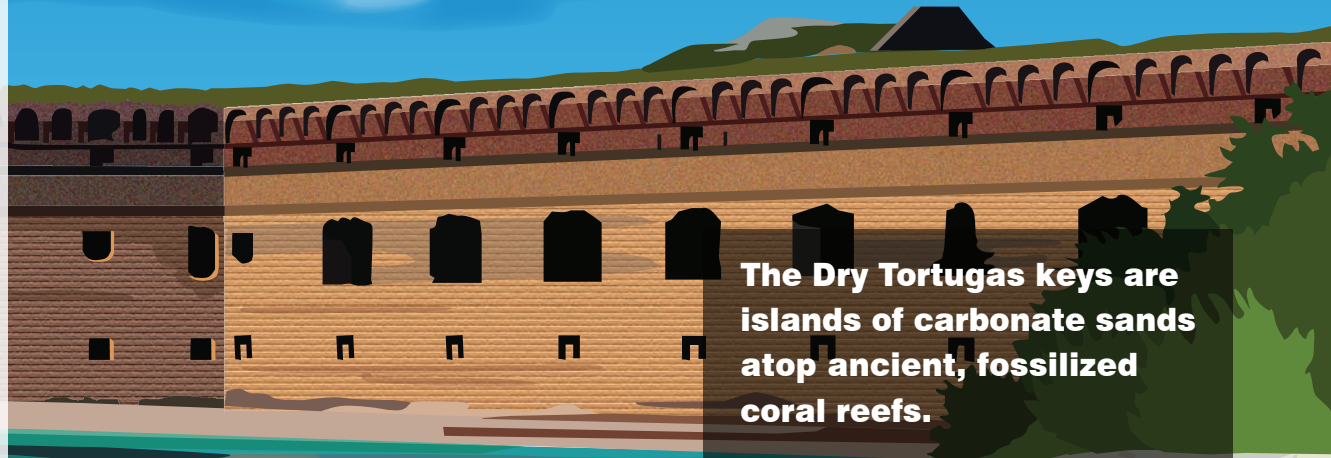
Animal Species in Park: **576+**

Notable Animal: **Stoplight
parrotfish**



Plant Species in Park: **155+**

Notable Plant: **Mangrove**



The Dry Tortugas keys are islands of carbonate sands atop ancient, fossilized coral reefs.

HISTORICAL FACTS

- Spanish explorer Ponce de Leon discovered this island archipelago in 1513.
- The US purchased Florida from Spain in 1822.
- Due to the many shipwrecks in the area, a lighthouse was built in 1825.
- Construction of Fort Jefferson began in 1846 but was never completed.
- The unfinished fort was used during the Civil War as a prison.

DID YOU KNOW . . .

- The park consists of seven small keys located 70 miles (113 km) west of Key West.
- The Dry Tortugas are named for the lack of fresh water and the many *tortugas*, the Spanish word for turtles.
- Live coral reefs in the park's waters are more than 11,000 years old.
- Coral diseases have been on the rise since the 1980s.
- Fort Jefferson is the largest brick masonry structure in the Western Hemisphere.

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